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A Chronology of Spode Patterns

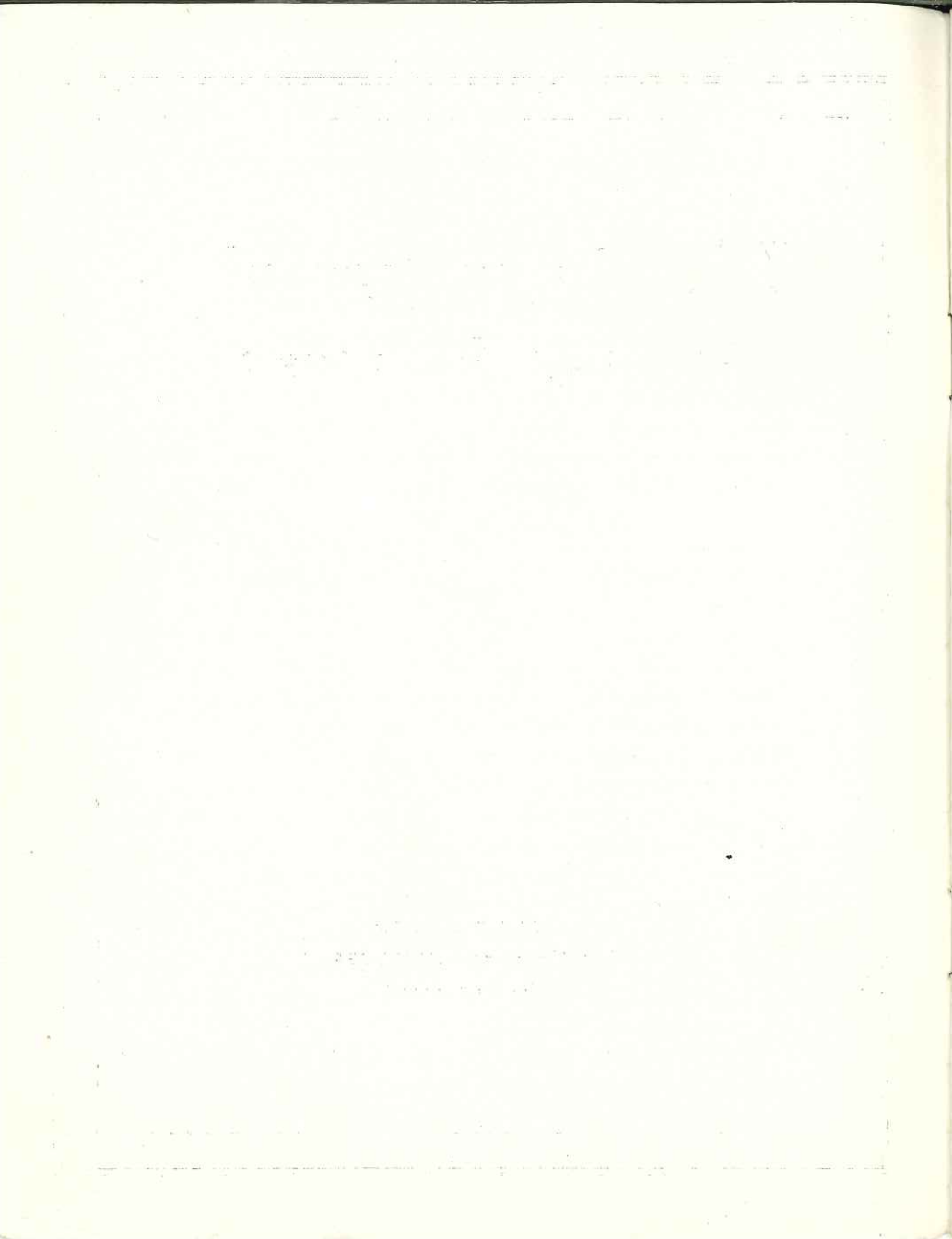


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DESIGN DIV.

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A CHRONOLOGY OF SPODE PATTERNS

TO determine the approximate date of a piece of late eighteenth or early nineteenth century English porcelain or earthenware on the basis of its shape or its mode of ornamentation is an almost impossible task. Once the English potters had freed themselves from the traditional thralldom of salt glaze, tortoise-shell glaze, and primitive creamware, and had begun to compete among themselves, as large manufacturers, in devising novelties, not only in the fabric of their wares but in their decorative treatment, new ideas and new methods crowded one upon another with bewildering speed. The best of sculptors were engaged to model figures and reliefs for reproduction in porcelain and earthenware; the cleverest of flower painters did not disdain to turn their talents to tracing dainty bouquets and wreaths upon dinner services; while the most versatile of engravers often cut the copper-plates from which transfer prints were drawn.

Even the really scholarly treatises on the subject of the English potters and potteries hesitate to offer a style chronology more exact than the broad generalizations derivable from a tabulation of marks, some of which remained almost unaltered for a long period of years. ANTIQUES, therefore, is happy to present, herewith, a dated series of Spode designs, which, though it includes but a few among a great multitude of patterns, may be looked upon as probably accurate in so far as it goes. The reproductions are taken from drawings and direct transcripts of engraved plates, for whose use ANTIQUES is indebted to the courtesy of Ronald Copeland, present head of the firm which today is conducting the works founded in the eighteenth century by Josiah Spode.

It should, of course, be borne in mind, that, since their first appearance, all, or nearly all, of these designs have been frequently

reissued, and that many are in course of production today. Hence the date assigned to any one of them may not invariably be accepted as indicating the year of manufacture for the piece upon which the design appears.

The history of the Spode factory—for the purposes of these notes—may be compressed into a paragraph or two. Josiah Spode the first, born in 1733, was apprenticed to Thomas Whieldon in 1749. In 1754 he is said to have left his master and set up in business for himself. In 1776 he established, in London, a wareroom and sales office, which gave him a large outlet for his products and accelerated the prosperity of his enterprises. On the death of the elder Spode, in 1797, Josiah Spode the second dominated the business, and succeeded in still further improving the firm's products. Josiah Spode the second died in 1827, when a third Josiah undertook the headship of the concern. On the latter's death, six years after, control passed to Spode's London representative, William Taylor Copeland, who, in partnership with Thomas Garrett, took over the factory and continued operations under the name of *Copeland and Garrett late Spode*. When this partnership was dissolved, in 1847, the firm name became *Copeland late Spode*, and so continued until 1867, when the present entitlement of *Copeland and Sons* was assumed.

The Spode factory has produced every variety of ware, including stoneware, creamware, ironstone china, highly glazed earthenware, together with great quantities of useful and decorative porcelain. To the approximate period of some thousands of recorded patterns, the dates of the few designs here reproduced may serve as a helpful, if not universal, key.



CHINESE PATTERN (c. 1776). Engraved transfer design, printed from the copperplate. An elaboration of the simple, blue-painted Chinese designs common to English creamware from the time when the invasion of blue and white porcelain from the Orient threatened destruction to the English potteries.



"ITALIAN" PATTERN (1780). This ancient Italian scene exemplifies the Classic revival which was beginning to offer competition to the previous Chinese taste.



THE FAMOUS "WILLOW" PATTERN (1782). Engraved for Spode by Thomas Minton, but probably originated by Turner of Caughley.



ANOTHER VERSION OF THE "WILLOW" PATTERN. Specially engraved for printing on stone china. *From the engraver's plate.*



SPODE'S "TOWER" (c. 1800). Perhaps another concession to the Classic taste, though more rustically romantic in its implications. *From the engraver's plate.*



"BLUE HERON" PATTERN (1784). Chinese influence. Produced first in blue, and later, about 1810, in underglaze colors. *From the engraver's plate.*



"GREEK" PATTERN (1784). A Classic design. Another Greek pattern, produced 1860-1870, is illustrated in *ANTIQUES*, Vol. XIII, p. 233.



"GRASSHOPPER" PATTERN (*produced 1804*). One of the Chinese designs gathered by William Copeland before his association with Spode.



"BANG-UP" PATTERN (1804). Produced by printing the outline, and filling in by hand with red, blue, and gold. The resemblance of this Japanese Imari adaptation to similar adaptations by the Derby factory will be observed. The origination of these designs, while usually credited to Derby, is claimed by Spode.



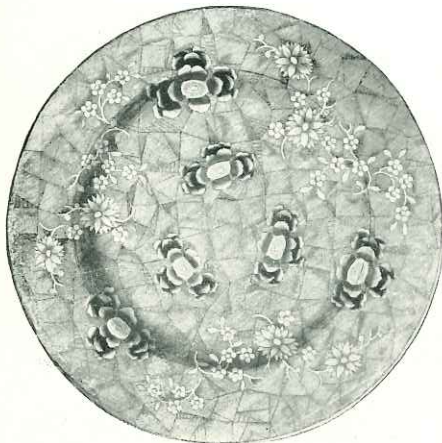
"BANG-UP" PATTERN (1806). Fundamentally identical with Figure 9, but altered in effect by the Chinese *famille rose* coloring under the glaze.



"PEACOCK" PATTERN (1805). An engraved outline filled with color by hand. Used on stone china.



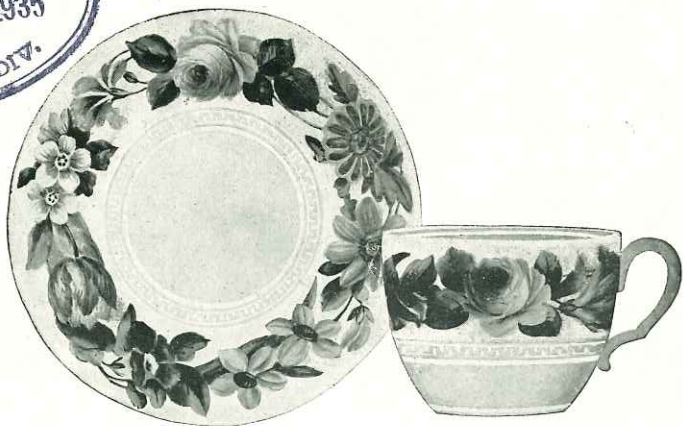
"BOW-POT" PATTERN (1805). Produced on stone china. Printed in outline under the glaze, and enameled over the glaze.



CHINESE CRACKLE (*c.* 1806). Adapted from the Chinese "cracked ice" design. Used in hand-colored transfers on stone china.



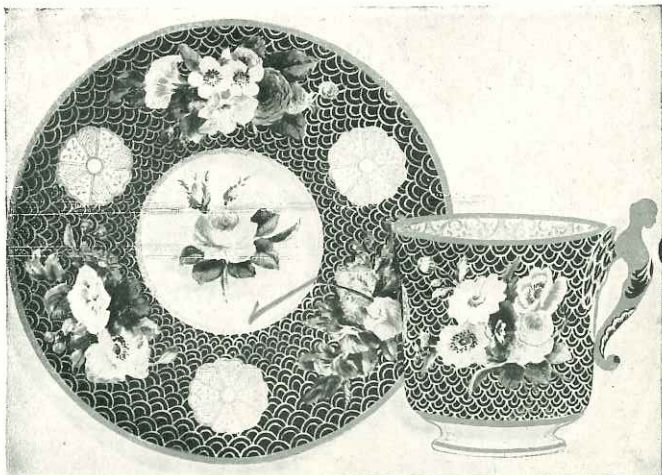
FLOWER VASE (1817). For stone china. Printed brown outline filled with underglaze color by hand. Remnants of Chinese influence are apparent.



PATTERN NUMBER 664 (c. 1792). Floral wreaths hand-painted on a gold ground, thoroughly English in feeling. Spode is credited with being among the first of the potters to break away from the influence of foreign designs, and to adopt familiar motives from the English countryside.



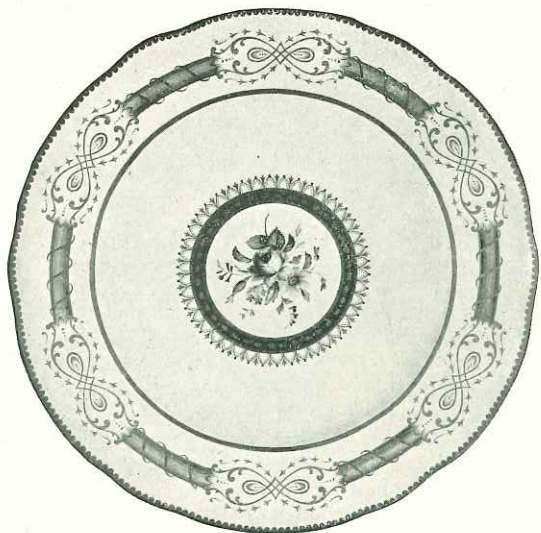
PATTERN NUMBER 967 (1794). The form of the cup is familiar in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century porcelain and earthenware. Here we have the so-called Japanese Imari pattern as applied to porcelain. Similar designs were produced at Derby and, to some extent, at Worcester.



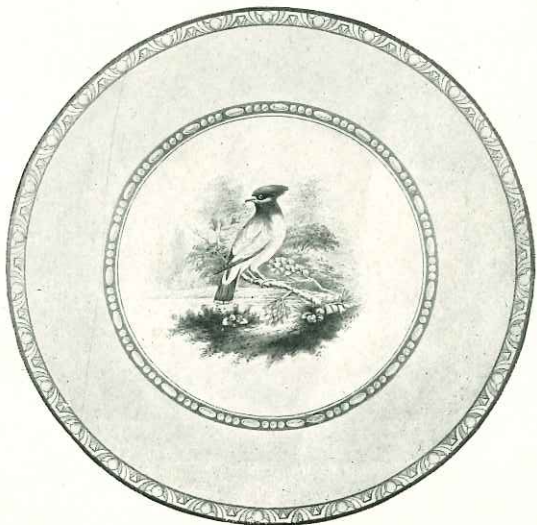
PATTERN NUMBER 1166 (1797). A porcelain pattern in which English flower bouquets imposed on a fish-scale ground are interspaced with Japanese medallions.



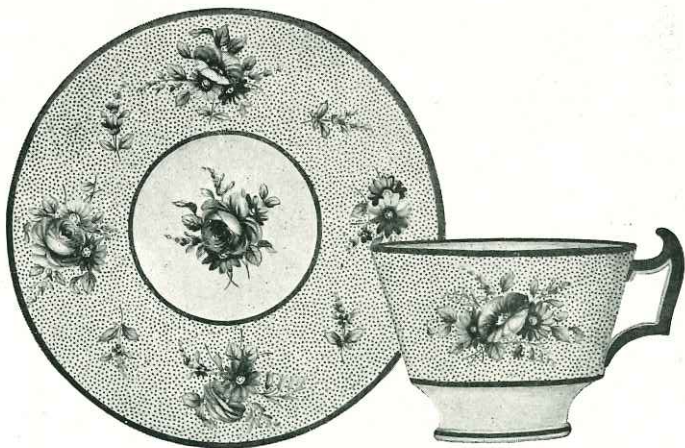
PATTERN NUMBER 1619 (1804). Porcelain vase with a quiet English landscape painted in a rich magenta monochrome which was widely popular at the time.



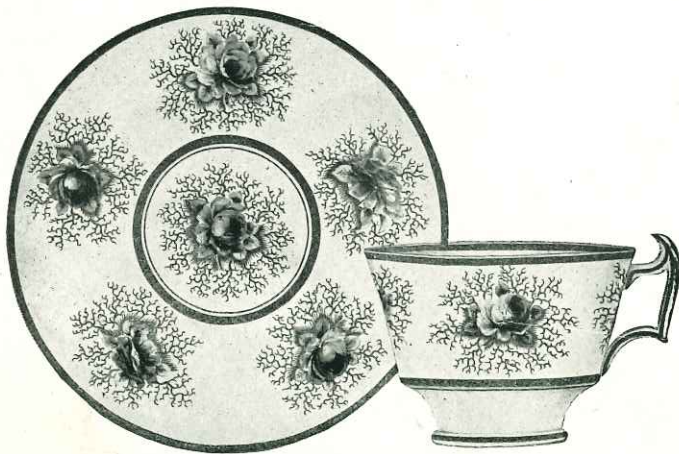
PATTERN NUMBER 1745 (1804). The beginning of the nineteenth century witnessed a diminution in the use of Chinese and Classic motives for the decoration of porcelain, though they were retained for the printed and enameled stone china. On porcelain we find the adoption of frankly naturalistic flower, bird, and landscape designs, carefully painted by hand and enriched with gold lines and borders.



PATTERN NUMBER 2114 (1807-1808). Another example of naturalistic painting.



PATTERN NUMBER 2009 (1808). The same form of cup as that bearing a design of 1794. The background of gold *picotage* and the scattered flowers suggest chintzes of the period.



PATTERN NUMBER 3503 (c. 1808). Roses against golden seaweed; a cheerful and typically English design, which would not be mistaken for that of any other country.



PATTERN NUMBER 2330
(1810). A porcelain design,
hand-painted in the exact and miniature-
like technique of the
period.



PATTERN NUMBER 2329
(1810). Another porcelain
decoration which
attained wide popularity.
Discussed in ANTIQUES,
Vol. VI, pp.
76, 77.

